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Life Subscription : Rs. 500/- Annual Subscription : Rs. 40/- Price per copy : Rs. 10/-

The views expressed in SHANMUKHA are the writer's own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editor/Publisher.

It may please be noted that articles sent to SHANMUKHA for publication will not be returned.

Printed and Published by Shri S. Seshadri on behalf of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.) and Printed at Sevak Press, B-1, Shalimar Industrial Estate, Matunga Labour Camp, Mumbai - 400 019 and Published from Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Plot No. 292, Comrade Harbanslal Marg, Sion (East), Mumbai - 400022.
Editor : Shri P. N. Krishnamoorthy. Registered with Registrar of Newspapers for India. R. N. No. 27938/75

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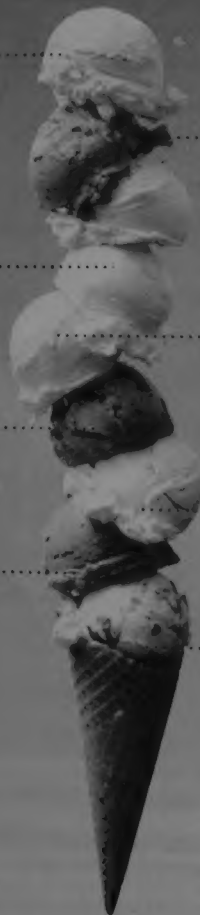
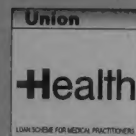
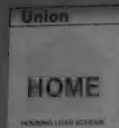
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IN FOCUS

The first article in this issue by Garland Rajagopalan relates an unique incident when the Paramacharya of Kanchi in his nineties presented Abhinaya, with all the Natya Bhavas, in the presence of an august gathering. In the article that follows, Indrani Chakravarti deals in detail about the contribution of the well known and popular musical instrument of India, the Sitar, to Hindustani Music. Eminent musicologist, Prof. Janakiraman outlines the lakshana and lakshya of a Poorva-Prasiddha Raga, Narayanagaula. In the next article, Shri Rajagopalan makes some interesting observations about the two vital elements of music, Bhava and Gamakas. Raga Chikitsa is a much discussed subject today and Shri Sairam cites it to be a powerful tool, to cure many an ailment. The next article discusses about certain core issues to narrow down the North-South divide with a hope that the twain shall meet. Mridanga Chakravarthy, Shri T.K. Murthy talks at length about Kaalapramaanam, his Gurukulavasam and the role of the instrument in a enlightening interview with Dr. Sulochana Rajendran. An interesting poem by Priya Viswanathan and three book reviews also find place in this issue. The recent passing away of veteran musician Shri A.S. Panchapakesha Iyer has left the music world poorer. A befitting tribute to this great musician-teacher and compiler of music books is presented. The issue concludes with two brief reports, one on the "3rd Jayendra Saraswati National Eminence Award" ceremony, which was conferred on Vidwan Shri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy and the other about the recent inauguration of the renovated Bharatiya Complex.

KANCHI SRI PARAMACHARYA IN CELESTIAL DANCE

by 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

Dances, particularly highly developed arts like *Bharatanatya*, bring out the essence, beauty, and finesse of overt or hidden emotions, thoughts and message in lyrics by graceful portrayal with limbs, body and facial expressions. Where there is *bhava* in the lyric, *abhinaya* takes over much of the portrayal. It is unsung music like sculptures but fully live, presenting varied expressions and alternatives. *Nritya* interprets, portrays and clarifies the subtle nuances in the lyric. Apart from helping appreciation of the meaning and message in the lyric, it helps to inculcate a sense of fragrant beauty and enduring aesthetic pleasure in the minds of receptive viewers. Where the *bhava* portrayal is classic and realistic, *rasa* - enjoyment flows out instantaneously. The entire credit of presenting exquisite *Bharatanatya* goes as much to the artiste as to the composer of the lyric and the accompanists. The stone lends itself to sculptures but a wooden lyric *sans* scope for portrayal of *bhava* is night sky without moon, river without water, temple without idol and lady with ornaments. For the dance to be absorbing, the *sahitya* has to be eloquent, the *sangita* natural in full accord with the theme and spirit of the lyric and the actual presentation superb, realistic and imaginative. That the composer is as important and gets as much credit to good performance as the artiste was clarified by selection of the hymn and in action by Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamikal

of Kanchi, reverentially hailed as Sri Paramacharya

Normally saints, more so Mataadhipatis, have little scope or occasion to bestow attention to dances with memorable exceptions like Swami Ramakrishna, who used to forget his earthly existence and dilute himself body and soul in dance and trance. That Sri Paramacharya of Kanchi was a keen devotee of arts, particularly music, is well known to all. That he had keen and deep insights in and inspirational addiction to the art of dance was unknown to most. Here is clinching evidence of the same. The episode is taken from the book '*Saint and Sangita*' brought out by Sri Maha Swami Peetarohana Shatabdi Mahotsav Trust, Mumbai.

Asthana Vidwan and Scholar, Gudalur Dr. G. R. Ramachandra Sastrigal brings to notice a very delicious, absorbing and exhilarating incident with pregnant significance, he was witness to. [Gudalur, incidentally, was ancestral home to Sangita Kalanidhi G. N. Balasubrahmanyam of virtuous fame.]

"Math Head Tambiran of Dharmapuram Adheenam went over to Kanchi to call on Swamiji during the latter's Jayanti celebrations and pay his respects. Swamiji, pre-empting his visit to Sankara Math, actually went to the Adheenam Matham at Kanchi in a rare gesture of spiritual solidarity and identity. Both walked to Sankara Math [*Ekam sat, viprah bahuda*



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vadanti.] When Acharya enquired about Tambiran's followers, the Sivacharyas [archakas] were presented to him. He enquired again specifically whether Odhuvaarmurtis of the Adheenam had come. Dharmapuram Adheenam is well known for its patronage and propagation of Tamil devotional hymns and hymnodists - Odhuvars.

"When the hymnodists were presented, Swamiji requested them to sing 'Nilai perumaaru ennudiyel nenje nee vaa!', a remarkable *padigam* [song] with cultured, beauteous content in *Tiruttaandagam* - 6th *Tirumurai* of Sri Appar Swamikal. They sang with accustomed devotion and joy. But what the assembly present witnessed then was unexpected and unique. There ensued wondrous performance highlighting, manifesting the contents of the song with *abhinaya*. Dance? When Chidambaram shifted for the occasion to Kanchi and the Cosmic Dancer inspired the saint to manifest and portray the content and subtle message of that *padigam*, what else could be witnessed? The Parmacharya of Kanchi, then in his nineties, in the presence of all, presented *abhinaya* - with all the *Naatya bhavas* - heart and soul fully tuned and dedicated to the song, ignoring his physical [*sthula*] presence, age, image and stature! It was *Atmanivedanam* - absolute surrender to the Lord, who is *Nada* Incarnate by the *Nada Swarupa* of Kanchi. When Cosmic Dancer Sri Nataraja has thought it fit to present his prowess in dance day in and out perpetually to inspire succeeding generations, why should not His *alter ego*

at Kanchi portray and enlighten the world with the purport, content and significance of at least one song of His Apostle for the benefit of admirers and followers? That he did, since he was not only *Nada Swarupa* but also *Nritta, Naatya Swarupa!* 'Aham *Brhmaasmi*' stood fully demonstrated!!

"Well, why had the saint asked the hymnodists of Dharmapuram to sing that particular song is a point that may engage the musical mind of *rasikas*. It will be seen that the song has all the fragrant potential and ingredients to present spiritual *abhinaya* in all its perfumed excellence. The song is reproduced below for enthusiasts to analyze and draw appropriate conclusions since it has much food for experts in aesthetics, music, musicology, dance, spiritual science apart from the beautician and the lay. A few may like to re-enact what Swamiji did for *Atmanubhava* - self pleasure at homes.

Nilai perumaaru ennudiyel nenje nee vaa
Niithalum Embiraanudaiya koil pukku
Pularvadanmun alagittu mezhugumittu
Poomaalai punaindetti pugazhndu paadi
Talaiyara kumbittu kutthumaadi
Sankara Jaya potri potri endrum
Alaipunalser senjadai em Aadi yenrum
Auraa endrendre alaru nille."

'O! Mind! Should you be thinking of eternal salvation, come dear.
How? You may wonder.
Well-accomplished, well-knit garlands in hand.
In the twilight hours, come to the Temple of our Lord.
Sing in praise of him; dance to His pleasure; offer prostrations.
Hail "Victory to Sankara" in praise of the Lord with plaited hairs.
Hail "Arura" passionately.'

"The scholar mentions that the reference to 'Sankara' can be taken to allude to Lord Parameswara as well to Adi Sankara, if so desired."

The song enjoys felicity of lyric and lends itself to absorbing, realistic portrayal with *Aangika, Vaachika, Aaharya* and

Saatvika Abhinaya. The saint chose it in the affluence of his spiritual and artistic graces.

The incident is unique for its remarkable significance and is worthy of being treasured by artistes, *rasikas* and the public. □

Sangeeta Gayatri

A striking instance of His Holiness' perception of the substance and spirit of a music composition is that of "Sri Subrahmanyaya Namaste" by one the Trinity of Carnatic Music, Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar (1775 - 1835). His Holiness expresses his displeasure over the rendering of this celebrated song by musicians who mutilate the 'sahitya' for musical effect. He cites the line 'Guruguhaya - ajnana - dvaanta - savitre' being rendered as 'Guruguhayaa - jnana - dvaanta - savitre'. What is intended as an invocation to the One 'who like the sun (who dispels) to the darkness of ignorance' is split in such a way to mean the One 'who is like the sun to the darkness of knowledge' - all this by mispronouncing 'Guruguhaya' as 'Guruguhayaa'. His Holiness cites other similar instances of mutilation of the text.

What is however, more remarkable of His Holiness' exegesis of the song is his discovery of 'Sangeeta Gayatri' in 'Sri Subrahmanyaya'. The God involved is, according to His Holiness, the Veda Devata as the very name 'Subrahmanya' connotes. Brahmanya is another name for the Veda. Then all the words contained in the Gayatri Mantra are found in the song - the Vyahritis, Bhu, Bhuvaha, Suvaha, Savitru, Varenyam, Dhi; Deva.

To read His Holiness' explanation of each word of the song is to get close to a mind that was a mansion of thoughts illumined by the light of the spirit.

Source : By Shri V. Sivaramakrishnan in 'Dilip' Magazine



Jamsetji N. Tata (1839-1904)

The Human Face of Industry



J.R.D. Tata (1904-1993)



Naval Tata (1904-1989)

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The Sitar is a well-known and popular musical instrument of India. It has acquired the highest status among all other instruments within a short period of time. It is believed that the Rudra Vina and the Saraswati Vina are the oldest chordophones of India, though a close examination of textual evidences shows that the name of Rudra Vina does not occur in any old text before 15th century and that Saraswati Vina or Tanjore Vina is only a modernized form of Rudra Vina.

Regarding the origin and development of Sitar, majority of scholars believe that the Sitar developed from Tritantri Vina, though some scholars are of the opinion that it was Amir Khusro who discovered this instrument. But it is to be noted that Amir Khusro has not mentioned the name of Sitar or Tabla in any of his books, though he was proud to be an Indian and declared in his book that the music of India was the best among the system of all other nations. Apart from such views about the origin of the Sitar, there are other scholars who believe that the Saitar of Kashmir is the forerunner of modern Sitar. This too is not authentic in my view, considering the structure, playing techniques and utility of the instrument.

If we search for the description of the Tritantri in old texts and trace its later development, we find that the name of Tritantri occurs for the first time in the Abhinavabharati of Abhinavagupta, where in the available edition, the word has been

misprinted as 'Vitantri'. Later, Sarangadeva mentions the name of Tritantri under the group of Nakula and other Vinas and describes the techniques of playing the forms and structure of Tritantri or other four kinds of Vina. He just mentions the number of strings i.e., three strings for Tritantri, two for Nakula and so on.

Kallinaatha, the commentator of Sangita Ratnakara of Sarangadeva, points out that the *Laukika* (popular) name of Tritantri was Jantra - '*Tatra Tritantrikaiva Loke Jantra Sabdenocyate....*' His contemporary Rana Kumbha just mentions the three Tumbas and three strings of Tritantri, hence, there is no mention of the *Laukika* name.

King Tulajaji of Tanjore, speaks of Tritantri as synonymous of Jantra and a few poets of the North refer to the names of Yantra or Jantra in their poems.

We get a vivid picture of Jantra in the *Ain-e-Akbari* of Abul Fazl and *Raagadarpan* of Fakirullah. It is identical with Jantar of Rajasthan, played by Bhopas - a tribal group, as an accompaniment to the songs sung in praise of their hero - named Bagraot.

Some scholars believe that Sehtar or Sitar is the later development of Tritantri, and they try to prove that the word 'Tritantri' was translated into Persian language by the Muslim musicians as they could not pronounce the compound word Tritantri of Sanskrit. That is how the word Sehtar was coined (Seh from Tri and Tar from Tantri),

and was popularized. It may be mentioned that in some parts of the country, Sehtar is still called as Yantra or Jantra.

Here, it must be pointed out that none of the authors of the above theories has suggested that this instrument came from Persian or Arabic countries.

Thus there is no doubt about its indigenous origin. Some scholars belonging to the last half of 18th and first half of 19th centuries, were however, inclined to give all the credit to Amir Khusro and recognized him as the discoverer of Tabla, Sitar, Khyal, Tarana, and a few Ragas and Talas.

It is, however, an admitted fact that the Sitar started to gain an important place among various musical instruments mainly when the Khyal singing was becoming popular. We know that the Rudra Vina of North as well as the Tanjore Vina and other instruments of the Karnatic style of today, basically follow vocal compositions when they are played. In Rudra Vina, the Dhrupada, Dhamar and Dadra compositions are played. Likewise, every chordophone of the South follows the Kritis and Padas which are composed for vocal singing. But the Sitar is the first instrument among chordophones, so far as tradition shows, which has invented its own style of playing, as it does not follow basically the vocal compositional forms. Unlike Rudra Vina and Tanjore Vina, Sitar does not use the Gita or Pada, but it uses its own 'Gat' compositions which are, no doubt, unique forms of musical compositions. These are now a days followed by other instruments also.

The Gat is of two kinds, viz., *Masitkhaani Gat* and *Razaakhaani Gat*.

The Masitkhaani Gat

It was named after its inventor Ustad Masit Khan of Senia tradition (Gharana). He was a descendent of Tansen - the Great Musician in Akbar's Court. It is also called Delhi Baaj. The tempo of the composition was slow but not like the trend of the present day which follows the Vilambita style of Khyal singing. But the real Masitkhaani Gat is to start, what we call, in medium tempo with a few types of Todas (Tanam with stroke - varieties, produced with the right hand combining and permutating the different strokes or bols). The Todas are played according to the different metres. Present day Gats follow mostly the vocal Taans. The Masitkhaani Gat has its own type of Jhaala - the last part of the composition. But today, this tradition has been broken.

Masitkhaani Gat starts from 12th beat and the strokes are fixed : though some modern musicians do not follow the rule and combine different strokes in their composition and name it a Vilambita Gat, which mean a slow compositional form. But Masitkhaani Gat has its own unique beauty in comparison to modern Vilambita Gat.

The Razaakhaani Gat

It is also called Lakhnavi Baaj or Purab Baaj. Gulam Razaa of Lucknow created this compositional form, and it was named after him.

The tempo of this composition is fast

and there is no hard and fast rule for the starting point and the strokes (Bols). In old compositions, the starting points were usually either from 7th beat or from 9th, 12th or 1st beat. Later a few more points were developed, viz., from 14th, 15th, 5th or 8th beats, and so on. The Jhaala of Razaakhaani Gat used to be different in comparison to the Jhaala of Masitkhaani Gat. Today the Jhaala is played in Razaakhaani Gat only.

Playing of a complete composition on Sitar today consists of the following parts: Alap, Jhor-Jhala, Masitkhaani Gat and the embellishments, Razakhaani Gat and its elaborations and Jhaala respectively.

Gamaka and its Technical Forms

'Gamaka' means that which leads us to somewhere or as knowing some specific things as in Indian Logic, e.g. Dhuma (the smoke) is the Gamaka of Agni (the fire). So by Gamaka we can mean (1) through which we can go to the embellishments of melody and (2) through which we may know to produce the techniques.

Bharata does not mention the term 'Gamaka' but the 'Kampa' is mentioned under three Alankaras, viz., Rechita, Kuhara and Kampita in terms of the Sthanas i.e. Mandara, Madhya and Tara respectively. Matanga substantiates these Alankaras. Naanyadeva and Somesvara mention seven varieties of Gamaka. Sarangadeva gives an elaborate description of Gamaka and most of the later authors follow him.

Sarangadeva describes Gamaka as a term under which all technical

productions can be made. He does not mention Gamaka as one of the varieties. Later, Hindustani Dhrupad or Vina tradition or Karnatic vocal tradition all have followed Sarangadeva, yet we find some changes in the name and in the usage of new terms. Moreover, both Hindustani and Karnatic systems have developed their oral tradition besides the textual evidences. The southern authors are more influenced by Sarangadeva in comparison to the Northerners. But in oral traditions it is interesting to note that both the Hindustani and Karnatic systems do follow the ten varieties of Gamakas (i.e. Dasavidha Gamaka), it is used both in the vocal and instrumental tradition, but sometimes under different names or varieties. Later, Lakshanas are ten, but some more developments occur. Here Gamaka is called as Svara-Lakshanas or Kaaydas out of which Gamaka itself is one of the ten varieties. In Southern tradition, Gamaka occurs as a principal term but in Vina-Lakshana of Paramesvara, the word Gamaka has also come (in place of Aahata?) as once of the ten varieties. In Karnatic music, the marks of distinct oral tradition of Dasavidha Gamaka can be found from the 18th century onwards. Sangitasaarasamgrahamu, Mahabharata Chudamani, Vina Lakshanam and Subbarama Dikshitar have described the Dasavidha Gamakas of oral tradition.

The names of 15 Gamakas of Sarangadeva, as we all know, are, Tiripa, Spurita, Kamptia, Lina, Andolana, Plavita, Vali, Kurula, Aahata, Tribhinna, Ullasita, Namita, Humphita, Mudrita and Misrita.

APPENDIX											
Gamakas or Svara-Lakshanas in Dhrupada Tradition	1	Svara Lakshanas in Rudra Vina Tradition	2	Terms of Sitar	3	Gamakas mentioned in Sangita Ratnakara	4	Gamakas of Karnatic System (as I was told)	5	Oral Tradition of Dashavidha Gamaka (as I heard)	6
	-		-		-	Tiripa	-	Tiripa or Nokku	-	Nokku	-
Sphurita		Something like Jhor-Jhaala		Jhor-Jhaala		Sphurita		Sphurita		Sphurita	
Kampita		Kampita		Kampan		Kampita		Kampita		Kampita (Large & Small)	
	-		-		-	Lina		Lina		Lina	
Andolana		Andolana		Andolana		Andolita		Andolita		-	
Dagara		Dagara		Similar to Chalan		Plaavita		Plaavita		-	
	-		-		-	Vali		Vali		-	
	-		-		-	Kurula		Kurula		Orike	
Gamaka		Gamaka		Gamaka				(Odukkal Orike)			
	-		-		-	Aahata		Aahata		Aahata	
Lahaka		Lahaka				Tribhinna		Tribhinna		Tripuccha	
	-		-		-	Ullasita		Ullasita or Jaaru		Jaaru & Dvigan	
Meend		Meend		Meend				(Irakka & Yetra)			
Hudaka		Similar to Sunt		Sunt		Namita		Namita		-	
	-		-		-	Humphita		Humphita		-	
	-		-		-	Mundrita		Mundrita		-	
	-		-		-	Mishrita		Mishrita		-	
Akara										Briga	
Dhuran		Dhuran								-	
Muran		Muran								-	

APPENDIX (Continued)										
Gamakas or Svara- Lakshnanas in Dhrupada Tradition	Svara Lakshanas in Rudra Vina Tradition	Terms of Sitar	Gamakas mentioned in Sangita Ratnakara	Gamakas of Karnatic System (as I was told)	Oral Tradition of Dashavidha Gamaka (as I heard)					
1	2	3	4	5	6					
Lag-dant	Lag-dant	Lag-dant	-	-	-					
Urap-Tirap	Urap-Tirap	-	-	-	-					
Krintan	Krintan	Krintan	-	-	Kairi					
-	Tikh-Chokh	-	-	-	-					
-	Hurap	-	-	-	-					
-	Dhakka	-	-	-	-					
-	Udaatta-Anudaatta	-	-	-	-					
-	-	Murki	-	-	-					
-	-	Ghasit	-	-	-					
-	-	Khatka	-	-	-					

Note :

1. The above material (Col. 1,4, 6) is based on the lectures given by Prof. Dr. Premilata Sharma, Head of the Deptt. of Musicology, B.H.U., and demonstrated by Shri Ritvik Sanyal of B.H.U. and Smt. Akhila Krishnan of Delhi under her supervision, in a two-day seminar sponsored by Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi.
Shri Sanyal is a disciple of Daagara Brothers and Smt. Akhila Krishnan has learnt from reputed musicians. Her descriptions differ from the texts.
2. Col. 2 was described by Ustad Asad Ali Khan Binkar of Delhi.
3. Col. 3 was narrated by Smt. Gomati Vishvanathan of Delhi, but she did not mention the text Sangita Sampradaya Pradarshini of Subbarama Dikshitar.
4. Nokku was mentioned in both the texts Sangita-sara Sangrahamu and Vinaalakshanam of Parameshvara.
5. Regarding most of the names of the columns 1, 2, 3, only rough connections are estimated.

Though the oral tradition of *Dagara* accepts ten Svaralakshanas viz; Akara, Dagara, Dhuran, Muran, Kampita, Andolana, Lahaka, Gamaka, Huduka, Sphurti; even some more Lakshanas are used as Urap-Tirapa, Lag-Dant, Meend, Krintam and so on. In the oral tradition of Vina playing some vocal lakshanas are omitted and some others are introduced, which proves that some specific techniques developed in Vina cannot be produced in the voice; likewise most of the scholars believe that Humphita and Mudrita Gamakas of Sarangadeva are exclusively for vocal use. Though the Vina Lakshanas are mainly numbered as ten, but a few more varieties are also found in use. The terms along with the later developments are as follows : Gamakas, Lahaka, Dagara, Dhuran, Muran, Meend, Sunt, Hurap, Dhakka, Udaatta, Anudaatta, Kampita, Andolana, Lag-Dant, Tikh-Chokh, Krintan etc.

In oral tradition of Karnatic style, I have heard of the Dasavidha Gamakas, they are as such - Kampita (large and small), Sphurita, Briga, Jaru and Dvigu, Aahata, Oriakai, Katri, Nokku, Tripucchha & Lina. I have heard another tradition which follows the 15 Gamakas of Sarangadeva, but sometimes tries to associate them with the oral terms. In my view, this tradition absolutely pertains to the voice. They are Lina, Tribhinna, Kurula, Orika, Kampita, Andolita, Sphurita, Tiripa or Nokku, Ahata, Ullasita, Plavita, Humphita, Mudrita, Namita and Misrita. Here, the term Orika (an oral term) is considered in the place of Vali.

I have made an attempt to draw a tree

of both the Hindustani and Karnatic styles of oral tradition and tried to substantiate the same with textual evidences from the Sangita Ratnakara. I have also tried to trace the similarity between these terms and with those used in Sitar at present (Vide Appendix).

In the Hindustani Khyal style of singing, Gamaka does not correspond with that mentioned in the Sangita Ratnakara, but here Gamaka is a part of other lakshanas which stands for extra breath force, whether it is used in Alapa or in this tradition, the term of Svara-Lakshana is generally different due to the influence of local dialects. We know a few such terms are also used in the oral traditions of Dhrupad, Vina and Karnatic styles. Sitar also follows the above trend. A few names of such terms are Meend, Krintan, Murki, Khatka, Ghasit, Jamjama, Sunt and so on. As I have pointed out that the playing of Gat (Style) in Sitar is a unique contribution to Hindustani music, moreover, some techniques of the left hand (sometimes it includes right hand also) have come in vogue and led to finer embellishments to produce Rasa. Some of them are as follows:-

Murki - This technique has never been used in Dhrupada and Vina style - rather it is forbidden. It has mainly come from Thumri style and adopted in Khyal and the instruments (excluding Vina), later. It gives a pleasant feeling to the player as well as the listeners. Murki is the combination of Krintan (cutting the notes) and Kan or Sparsha (touching the note without the stroke). The Gat embellished

with Murki sounds enchanting. The notation of Murki is RSNS or (S).

Khatka - It means to touch the notes with jerk or stress, sometimes slowly, but there must be the jerk.

Ghasit - It means rubbing. When two or more notes are taken rubbing the string, it is called Ghasit. Ghasit is mainly used in instruments without frets but it can also be taken in fretted instruments.

Sunt - There is a difference between Ghasit and Sunt. In Sunt, one goes from one note to another, without breaking the sound and with the help of Meend, but Ghasit is used generally in the place of Meend (pulling the string), where the string is rubbed for getting the another note.

Tana - There are at least 15 varieties of Tana. In Dhrupada and Vina, excluding the Boltana, Chanda Tana (different varieties of meters) and Gamaka Tana, the other varieties are not used, but in Sitar most of the Tana varieties of Khyal and Tappa singing including the above, are widely used. Thus, Sitar has opened the door for elaborations accepting both Vina and Khyal styles. Some Tana varieties like Sapat, Ekahara, Lari, Choot ki Taan etc. are never used in Vina playing but are specifically used in Sitar.

Alapa - Today Sitar is played in both the Been Anga (Vina tradition) and Khyal Anga. But regarding Alapa, Sitar follows the Dhrupada - its Nom Tom style which

does follow the Vina. Thus, Sitar tries to give a particular shape of a Raga before starting the compositional form. Some modern musicians may try to accept that they are following the Khyal style, but that is only with the compositional part. In Alapa portion they do follow the Alapa used in Vina tradition, because in Khyal the Alapa is taken with the composition itself, set to specific Tala; but never before the composition as is done in Dhrupada, Vina, Sitar, and most of the other stringed.

Jhala - Sitar has developed a specific style of playing of a complete Raga, followed by other instruments. It starts with Alap, Jhor & Jhala, proceeding through Masitkhaani and Razaakhaani Gats with the elaborations and ends with Jhala. But in Vina, the Jhala part is played with only Alap-Jora, but not at the end. Moreover, in Khyal singing it is not necessary to conclude the recital with a Tarana. Some of the instruments like Flute, Violin, Sarangi etc. which follow basically the Khyal style, also conclude their playing with Jhala.

In this way, Sitar has contributed to amalgamation of the best parts from Dhrupad, Khyal, Tappa, Tarana to make playing of the Raga complete, with a few novel additions of playing-techniques and has developed its own style. □

Courtesy : The Journal of the Madras Music Academy, Vol. LII

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NARAYANAGAULA

by Prof. S. R. Janakiraman

The first janya raga that is taken up by Tulaja under Kambhoji mela is Narayana Gaula. It is sampoorana, of course, in the sense that it takes all the svaras in both arohana and avarohana taken together. Nishada is the graha, amsha and nyasa. No doubt, nishada is an important jiva svara or raga chaya svara. Regarding the ganakala of the raga, Tulaja says - 'Yame turiyake' - it is evening. There is a specific mention by Tulaja that 'pa da ni sa' does not occur in the arohana.

'Nidhanisadhanisa ityevgacchati
padhaniseti nagacchati'

All the illustrative prayogas given by Tulaja go to confirm that the arohana and avarohana could safely be determined as follows; 'sa ri ma pa ni dha ni sa - sa ni dha pa ma ga ri ga ri sa'. Tulaja could also have specified that 'ni dha pa ma ga ri sa' is not allowable. The phrases 'ni dha pa ma' and 'pa dha ma ga ri sa' seem to be very common as evidenced by the tana varna of Veena Kuppayyar in Narayanagaula. This varna is an encyclopedia in this raga. Veena Kuppayyar himself was known as 'Narayanagaula Kuppayyar'. 'ma pa ni ni sa' and 'ma pa ni dha ni sa' are both equally prominent. In the varna quoted above, there are occurrences of the phrases such as 'Sa ni dha pa - Pa ma ga ri - sa Ni sa ri ma ma pa (last charana svara). Similarly in the mukthayisvara we find 'n d n p' - 'ma ga ri Sa'. In both these phrase 'ni sa ni ga

ri ga sa ri' occurs in both the sthayis (with 'ni' in the mandra and also in the madhya sthayis). Similarly 'ga ri ga sa ri' occurs in both the madhya and tara sthayis. In these phrases the combination of kaisiki nishada and antara gandhara is not a very wholesome one and here the practical tendency makes the gandhara slightly flattened though not upto the level of sadharana gandhara. It is amazing to note as to how and why Subbarama Dikshitar, the doyen of musicology did not take cognisance of this fact, though in a similar situation (but in a lesser degree) in the phrase 'sa ri ga ri sa' in Khamas, he takes care to specify that the gandhara speaks less in sruti. The phrase 'ni ga ri ga sa ri' occurs twice in the famous Narayanagaula varna of Veena Kuppayyar. In 'Sri Ramam' of Dikshitar, we see the occurrence of 'Ni ga Ri ga' in 'Naradaadi'. The deergha dhaivata, though occasional, is another salient feature in Narayanagaula. The anupallavi of 'Sri Ramam' of Dikshitar starts with 'Dha Pa Ma' (Deergha) and then again in the charanam 'ri Ma pa Ni Ni; da'; (Kusa Lava Tatam) This sort of a deergha dhaivata is not to be seen in the Narayanagaula varna of Kuppayyar. The dhaivata in the varna is given as deergha only for two aksharakalas and never more than that. Only deergha madhyama and nishada are highlighted in the varna; deergha rishabha does not seem to have been given a place. In this varna, the raga hovers over a full range of two sthayis from mandhara

madhyama to tara madhyama. But in the kriti 'Kadalevadu' of Tyagaraja and 'Sri Ramam' of Dikshitar, we find only the mandra panchama and tara rishabha (perhaps gandhara also) touched.

We apparently find difference between the effect created by Tyagaraja in his 'Kadalevadu' and by Dikshitar in his 'Sri Ramam'. In the former the madhyama is rather plain, while in the latter it is softened, as per certain version in 'Ri; Ma; Ga Ga Ri ga ri' Sri Ramam Ravi.

Deergha gandhara is also to be noted here in this context. This is of course a rare phenomenon. In Tyagaraja's dealing, we find a regular descent as 'ni dha pa ma ga ri sa ri' as in 'Kadalevadu' or it may be a difference in version perhaps it is 'dha pa ma ga ri ga ri'.

Rishabha, madhyama and nishada are the eminent jiva svaras, raga chaya svaras. Nishada is however not to be found employed as an assertive graha svara, though the intermediary phrases have nishada at the beginning. The raga is not characterized by any deergha graha and nyasa, except perhaps for deergha madhyama being employed as graha in 'Kadalevadu' of Tyagaraja. This raga further does not provide much scope for jhanta, dhatu, ahata and pratyahata combinations of svaras. Only the movement of single noted phrases seem to dominate. Madhyamakala dominates this raga. That is why some anonymous author has created a place for Narayanagaula in the Dvitiya Ghana Panchaka group. The very conception Dvitiya Ghana Panchaka is faulty in as

much as Saranganata and Bowli are mentioned as belonging to the group. Narayanagaula is eminently suited for varna and kriti and not for other types of compositions. It is more of the type of 'madhyama' raga in the classification of ragas by Ramamatya into uttama, madhyama and adhama ragas.

Subbarama Dikshitar's treatment of Narayanagaula is very concise but the essence of it is there. The lakshana sloka quoted by him, under the authorship of Ventakamakhi, is found in the Raga lakshana appendix printed at the end of the text of the *Chaturdandi Prakasika*, both in Sanskrit and the Tamil translation thereof as brought out by the Music Academy and it read thus:

'syan narayanagaulastu sampurno
nigrahanvitah
arohe gadhavarjascha vinyasadvidyate
kvachit'

The murchana arohana avarohana is given as follows: 'ri ma pa ni dha ni sa - ni dha pa ma ga ri ga ri sa'; upanga raga; nishada is graha. Gandhara and dhaivatha are varjya in the arohana, but occur in vinyasa; can be sung at all times.

The specific note provided, rather added by Subbarama Dikshitar is significant. The commencement of the murchanarohana and avarohana with rishabha and nishada respectively, make these notes as graha and thereby the most important jiva svaras and amsha svaras. He quotes the poorvacharyas

Bharata and Matanga in this context. When in a raga a svara is mentioned as graha, it implies the other two, i.e., the same note must be amsha and nyasa also. Sarangadeva too mentions such a point. He says that if, of the graha, amsha and nyasa svaras, one is mentioned, it implies the other two as well. But this statement does not carry weight uniformly in all cases, say for instance, gandhara of Sahana. It is the dominating jiva svara but seldom occurs as a graha and nyasa. Similarly dhaivatha too.

Here in Narayanagaula it is reported wrongly under the authorship of Venkatamakhi that gandhara and dhaivatha are varjya in the arohana. Gandhara is no doubt varjya in the arohana but how about dhaivatha? The phrasing 'pa ni dha ni sa' is as frequent and appropriate in usage as 'ri ma pa ni sa', perhaps the former being rather more so, as evidenced by standard lakshyas available. Subbarama Dikshitar adds further that though nishada is the important graha, amsha and nyasa, rishabha too is an important nyasa svara. He further says that though 'ma ga ri ga ri sa' is incorporated in the murchana, the phrase 'ma pa dha ma pa ma ga ri' sounds more beautiful in the raga. He concludes by saying that the phrase 'pa ni sa' is in usage. This is a very important point to be noted.

Subbarama Dikshitar quotes a Kaivara prabandha of the 'real' Venkatamakhi, the son of Govinda and Nagambika. In the 'Mudra Khanda' of the prabandha, we come across:

Sankaramunimatapratisthavana
Kovidu Govindadhvarina
Ragambikasuta Venkatakamakhi

The above Kaivara prabandha contains all sorts of phrases quite in line with the current phrases occurring in the raga Narayanagaula. Subbarama Dikshitar's sanchari is well expressive of the form of the raga, as illustrated through the kritis of Tyagaraja and Dikshitar.

To trace the history of the raga at least with reference to the nomenclature, we do not come across the raga either in *Sangita Makaranda* or in *Sangita Samaya Sara* or even in *Sangita Ratnakara*. Pandit Srinivasa mentions Narayanagaula in his work written exclusively on the music of the South. Panditaradya Charita of Palkurukki Somanatha Kavi does not mention Narayanagaula.

Holy Vidyaranya mentions Narayanagaula in his 50 janya ragas as authoritatively reproduced in the *Sangita Sudha* of Govinda Dikshitar. It is the only janya of Kedaragaula mela as reported in the *Sangita Sudha*.

'Narayanagaulasya Kedaragaulasya cla
melaekah
.....nyasograhomsaya nisada eva'

The lakshana slokas as given in the *Sangita Sudha* in general with regard to the akshiptika, raga vardhani, vidari, shadjamadyama-panchama sthaya etc. are not very much intelligible with reference to current practice; illustrative phrases could have served better. But certain key

statements are significantly noteworthy.

We do not come across Narayanagaula in the ragas adopted by Thallapaka Annamacharya. We find only Narani, Narani Deshkhii. Similarly we do not come across Narayanagaula in Lochana Kavi's *Ragatarangini*, Ramamatya's *Svaramela Kalanidhi* or in Somanatha's *Raga Vibodha*.

The next treatise worthy of note is the *Chaturdandi Prakasika*, Venkatamakhi. In the *Mela Prakarana* of *Chaturdandi Prakasika*, Venkatamakhi mentions and describes only the 19 purva prasiddha or kalpita melas and Kambhoji is one among them. In the *Raga Prakarana* while enumerating ragas with nishada as graha, amsha and nyasa, Venkatamakhi mentions Narayanagaula as one such. In the very brief description of the janya ragas one by one in order, Narayanagaula is mentioned as a janya of Kedaragaula. Sloka 102 in *Raga Prakarana* of *Chaturdandi Prakasika* of Venkatamakhi goes thus —

'Narayanagaulastu sampurnah
prakirtitah Kedaragaula melotthasah'

The above is the edition of the text of *Chaturdandi* as done by Pandit Subramanya Sastri and T. L. Venkataramayyar, printed and published by the Music Academy, Madras. This gross mistake, be it a typographical error or a printing error is repeated in the Tamil translation of the text also as done by Pandit Subramanya Sastri and published by the Music Academy, Madras. We have

to take refuge only in the defence counsel projected by late M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer, when he protects Ramamatya against the scorching criticism by Venkatamakhi, of certain viewpoints of the former: 'What sort of a copy of the manuscript of the work fell in the hands of Venkatamakhi copied and recopied by different indifferent copyists!' Besides it can also be inferred here that though Venkatamakhi launched his own creative mela system, he still had in the innermost recesses of his heart, what his father had to say about Narayanagaula. We know pretty well that Govinda Dikshitar described Narayanagaula as the only janya of Kedaragaula mela on the authority of the treatment of 15 melas and 50 janyas by Holy Vidyaranya; it is very definite that to Venkatamakhi Kambhoji alone was the mela. Sloka 98 of *Raga Prakarana* of the *Chaturdandi Prakasika* of Venkatamakhi of the same edition and the Tamil translation thereof reads thus:-

'Kedaragaulah sampurnah
Kambhojimela sambhavah'

How can one and the same raga be both a mela and janya?

In the very first nomenclature for the 72 melas evidently appearing in the *Sangraha Chudamani* of Govindacharya, the 28th mela is found only as Kambhoji. It is only in the later Kankambari mela nomenclature the 28th mela became, Harikedaragaula, evidently with a view to replace the bhashanga raga to fulfil the Katapayadi requirements to get at the correct serial number of the mela in the

scheme. But still there is the question as to where is the documentary evidence and proof that Kambhoji is a bhashanga raga. But no doubt there has been a tinge of bhashangatva in Khamboji as could be traced to the rendering of Tevara hymns in Takkesi Pann. Definitely from the 18th century A.D. onwards, Kambhoji has been only a bhashanga raga in practice, if not in books.

In the *Sangita Chudamani* of Govindacharya, Narayanagaula is recorded as a janya of Harikambhoji, the 28th mela with the following arohana - avarohana 'sa ri ma pa ni dha ni sa - sa ni dha pa ma ga ri sa'. In the *Lakshana gita* it is recorded as

'Arohagavariya vakra avaroha
Sampurnam nigrahanyasamsha

.Harikambhojimelajanita
Narayanagaularagah'

Sangita Sara Sangrahamu of the 'so called' Akalanka also gives the similar scale structure and puts it under Harikambhoji mela. There is a specific mention here that this raga Narayanagaula partakes Kedaragaula chaaya.

Ahobala's *Sangita Parijata* makes mention of Narayanagaula. The illustrative phraseology is however not in variance with the current trends. (Slokas 419 - 420). (Note: *Sangita Parijata* of Ahobala as quoted

in this anthology is the edition of the text by Kalivara Vedamta Vagasja and Sarada Prasada Gosh and published by Basanta Lata Mitra - the New Sanskrit Press Calcutta - 1879)

Raga Pravaham quotes one version of the arohana - avarohana Narayangaula as 'sa ri ma pa dha ni sa - sa ni dha pa ma ga ri ga ri sa'. The arohana is not in the line with current practice.

Gana Bhaskaram of K. V. Srinivasa Iyengar follows *Sangraha Chudamani* and *Sangita Sara Sangrahamu* in giving the arohana - avarohana as 'sa ri ma pa dha ni sa - sa ni dha pa ma ga ri sa'. Everything said and done, though 'pa ni sa' is also not prohibitory, 'pa ni dha ni sa' is favourable. 'ma ga ri ga ri sa' is more favourable than a 'ma ga ri sa' in the descent.

Sangita Sara Prastara Sagaramu of Nadamuni Panditar, a work of commendable value (Telugu) gives Narayanagaula as a janya of Harikambhoji with 'sa ri ma pa ni da ni sa - sa ni da pa ma ga ri sa' it will do well to retain this, though a regular descent as 'ni dha pa ma ga ri sa ri' occasionally is not prohibitory. We find this phrase in 'Kadalevadu' of Tyagaraja, as noted earlier. This phrase 'ni dha pa ma ga ri sa' and also 'pa dha ma ga ri sa' are incorporated in the authoritative lakshya prabandha - the tana varna of Veena Kuppayyar. □

Courtesy : Music Academy, Madras.

BHAVA AND GAMAKAS

by 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

Bhava and *Gamakas* are the two eyes, vital ingredients, life-giving elements of Indian music, which bring out the soul of the lyric and enhance the beauty and fragrance of its rendition elevating both to sparkle and inspire. Song (lyric, *sahitya*) bereft of *bhava* and rendition of it without *gamakas* lack *jiva*. *Bhava* manifests the emotions that lay hidden or otherwise in the lyric and the beauties that could be distilled or spun out of the *raga*. When the musician brings it out competently drawing inspiration and sustenance partly from the theme of the lyric and partly from the composer's *manodharmic* expertise and excellence, music gains *purnatvam* in excellence. Rendition with appropriate *gamakas* is mostly within the realm of the singer, though the composer has to provide the needed scope therefore in the lyric. While *bhava* brings to display emotions and vibrations *vis a vis* the lyric, *gamakas* as highlighted by voice modulations, intonation, graces, vibrations, embellishments, etc., provide the needed graces and glamour, leaving an inspiring impact on the listener by enveloping his attention. Musical variations aesthetically rendered spiced with judicious ornamentation through *gamakas* elevate the image and standard of lyric, its rendition and overall music. The beauty of wave action on the sea or lake is a delight to the human eye and it is equally so with music bringing out these. Palkurki Somanatha

Kavi (14th century) eloquently clarifies thus:

"Music without *gamakas* is like a moonless night, river without water, creeper without flowers and lady without ornaments."

Of course the last clause 'lady without ornaments' may, perhaps, not fully engage people drowned with Western orientation. Where the musician understands the meaning of the lyric, his rendition is apt to highlight effortlessly *bhava* to a greater extent. If lyric provides the flesh and bone, it is *bhava* that invests the song with the needed charm and beauty, life, soul and vitality. Co-existence of these bring out *in extenso* the beauty of the song and its rendition as well as the unrevealed meaning and hidden message of the song enabling the audience to fall in line instantaneously with the singer or the dramatic character and indirectly with the composer.

Be he a *cognoscenti* or novice, the music-lovers hears the same songs hundreds of times but quite intriguingly suffers from no satiation! Why? The charm of the *raga*, the lure of the *bhava* in the song and the *gamaka*-laden ornamental rendition provide the allure. In their robust outlook, as if to help musicians in ensuring these vital requisites, great composers have mostly chosen not only the *raga* most appropriate to the lyric - *sahitya*, but also have left scope to lavish use of *gamakas*. Because of this, even novices, ignorant of

and without the effort to grapple with, convey the true content and message of the song and convey to a greater or lesser extent the *bhava* unconsciously to the delight of *rasikas*. If the musician understands the true purport and message of the lyric, the impact is wholesome and the rendition overwhelms the audience. Let us bring to focus just a song or two as illustration.

As Jupiter has shifted from *Kanya Rasi* to *Thula Rasi* in September 2005, the song *Brihaspate Tarapate* of Muthuswami Dikshitar of the Trinity appropriately attracts my mind. *Brihaspati* being *guru* to the entire realm of divinity, naturally is held in the highest esteem. So Dikshitar chose the commanding *raga Atana* and made the singer adhere to a high pitch (*tara sthayi*). His own reverence to *Brihaspati* had led him unconsciously to adopt such a *raga* and that pitch surely without resort to revolving reconnoiters. Where the mind stands elevated, thoughts and deeds reflect that mood like a mirror.

Saint Tyagaraja turns philosophic (Did he ever require to 'turn'?), presumably after his mandatory *puja*, allowing his rich, dedicated mind wander passionately over the infinite, unique graces of Sri Rama and the *soukhyam* he himself enjoys because of His benediction. Let us imagine gratuitous tears flowing down his eyes (*kadalahi, kasindu, kannir malhi...*) and emotions choke his devout musical throat. His singular peculiarity among *vaggeyakaras* is that he lavishly conveys without mental restraint or constraint, his feelings, impressions and thoughts through

delectable songs. He takes up *raga Kapi* and sings,

"*Inta soukhyamani ne jeppajala Ento yemo evariki telusono*"

(How can anybody or I describe the infinite boons and joy You have bestowed.)

The grateful heart plunges into the deep, unraveled oceanic caves and depths of virgin gratitude. Even a novice singing this song with the accustomed *bhava* brings out the lyrical beauty effortlessly and when he intones and modulates his voice with *gamakas*, the bonus of joy is profound and immeasurable, indeed. The ardent *rasika* sits still as if in trance, an image of a mini Tyagaraja or Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

Again let us presume that he sits after his daily *puja* and sparse meal on the pial of his renowned Tiruvaiyaru house, his noble mind revolving in space flights around the rich captivating episodes in *Ramayana*. His mind comes to grips with the exalted glory of Sabari and gloats over the fortune of the innocent hunter lady. He spares no word in his wondrous praise for that innocent one presented by Valmiki with effulgent beauty.

Sabari! The unique favour, unavailable even to chaste spouses of realized souls (*rishis*) who abound in this holy land, you, just a ribal in a forest, won it easily from Sri Rama! I could not unravel the mystery of it, Sabari! You were able to gather His infinite graces, sit by his side, enjoy His darshan, give Him fruits to eat, and much more! How great, grand and fortunate!

Will *raga Atana* or *Kapi* adopted for the preceding songs suit this one giving expression to the wondrous wonder of a high intellectual like him at the extraordinary fortune got by a lowly placed rustic? He invokes the beautiful *raga Mukhari* since the gift unavailable even to the most 'qualified' was there before the rustic tribal! Was there a lurking longing (pray, do not mistake it for jealousy!) in his luscious heart that he was neither born as Sabari nor blest to secure such a unique favour she had enjoyed from his chosen deity (*Ishta Devata*)? The lyric gives scope for raising such a surmise. Why not?

Lord! Your selection of beneficiaries for Thy graces is unmatched, often intriguing indeed! How significantly they reach the most deserving, in which ever segment of society he or she happens to belong? The *bhava* the song is invested with and the *gamakas* the singer brings into play intelligently, apart from *sancharas* - embellishing delineation in presenting it portray and manifest the inherent beauty and soul of the concept and the lyric. It is vital that in indenting on embellishments and ornaments, the musician bridges his *manodharma* properly. The following discussion explains it:

Guru teaches his disciple the kriti,

Kshirasagara Sayana in the delectable *raga Devagandhari* elaborating the different alternatives with *sangatis* and *sancharas* in singing the part '*Kshirasagara*'. Disciple is intrigued why embellishments are confined only to that word and not to the portion '*sayana*' and seeks clarification. The Guru clarified thus:

"Child! The part you mention is '*sayana*', which means reposeful attitude. Can anyone indulge in *sangatis* and *sancharas* while in that mood and posture? Surely not, you know. Hence embellishments and ornamentation naturally could embrace only the earlier word, viz., *Kshirasagara*. Am I correct?"

"I understand, *Guruji*! Ornamentation too has its place and occasion."

Our ancients were experts in legating eternal truths thorough songs and musically chanted hymns since tune and tone not only enhance the beauty of the script but help and inspire easy memorization.

Saints and sages have successfully availed of the tool of music to legate eternal truths and wisdom. Even the first of great poets, the *Adi Kavi* significantly instructed his wards Lava and Kusa to convey *musically* the *Ramayana* he had taught them to spread its virtuous circulation. And the world knows how he was absolutely correct! □

RAGA CHIKITSA - THE INDIAN MUSIC THERAPY

by T. V. Sairam

Long before acoustics came to be understood in Europe as a subject of study, the ancient Arab, Greek and Indian civilizations were already familiar with the therapeutic role of sounds and vibrations and the later day concepts pertaining to them. While music as a whole is well recognized for its entertainment value, the Indian civilization had gone a step forward to attribute the curative aspect to music. The ancient system of Nada Yoga, which dates back to the time of Tantras, has already acknowledged the impact of music on body and mind and put into practice the vibrations emanating from sound to uplift one's level of consciousness. It is the Indian genius that recognized that ragas are not just conceived for entertainment alone, but that the vibrations within their structure could even touch one's interiors as a healing medicine. By activating emotions and controlling brain wave patterns, ragas could perform the role of a powerful tool for alleviating many an ailment.

What is a Raga?

Raga we all know is the sequence of selected notes (*swaras*) and lend appropriate 'colour' or emotion in selective combination. Depending on its nature, a raga could induce or intensify joy or sorrow, anger or peace and it is this quality which has to be carefully understood while attempting to induce a desired emotional pattern in listeners. Thus, a whole range of

emotions could be captured and communicated within the rhythms and harmonies of different ragas. Practitioners of both Carnatic and Hindustani systems are fully aware of the power and influence of healing ragas. Playing, performing and even listening to appropriate ragas is believed to work as a complementary medicine – if not as an exclusive medical prescription. Various ragas were recognized to have definite impact on certain ailments.

Historic References on Raga Chikitsa

The ancient Hindus had relied on music for its curative role; the chanting and toning involved in Veda Mantras in praise of God have been used from time immemorial as a cure for several disharmonies in the individual as well as his environment. Several sects of 'bhakti' such as Chaitanya Sampradaya, Vallabha Sampradaya have accorded priority to music. Historical records too indicate that one Haridas Swami who was the guru of the famous musician in Akbar's time, Tansen is credited with curing one of the queens of the Emperor by playing a selected raga in his Veena.

The great composers of classical music in India called the 'Musical Trinity' - who were curiously the contemporaries for the 'Trinity of Western Classical Music', Bach, Beethoven and Mozart lived – were quite sensitive to the acoustical energies.

Legend has it that Saint Thyagaraja brought a dead person back to life with his Bilahari composition 'Naa Jiva Dhaara'. Muthuswamy Dikshitar's Navagraha kriti - 'Bnhaspate', is believed to cure stomach ache. Shyama Sastry's composition 'Durusuga' uses music to pray for good health.

Raga Chikista was an ancient manuscript, which dealt with the therapeutic effects of ragas. The library at Thanjavur is reported to contain such a treasure on ragas, that spells out the application and use of various ragas in fighting common ailments.

Raga Chikitsa : Raga Therapy in India

Living systems show sensitivity to specific radiant energies – be it acoustical, magnetic or electro-magnetic. As the impact of music could be easily gauged on emotions and thereby on mind, it can be used as a tool to control the physiological, psychological and even social activities of the patients.

Indian classical music can be classified into two forms : *kalpita sangita* or composition, which is previously conceived, memorized, practised and rendered and *manodharma sangita* or the music extemporized and performed. The latter is valued as the highest degree of musical culture as it demands both spontaneity and improvisation. It is fresh and natural as it is created almost on the spot and rendered the *raga lakshana*, *jiva swaras* and *nyasa swaras*, the *raga ranjaka* combinations and *visesha prayogas* involved in the raga system. Here the artist

is given a free hand to 'float' freely with his instantaneous improvisations.

Listening to *kalpita sangita* – as it is preconceived and in all probability pre-heard by the listeners lacks surprises. It is more like sightseeing on a conducted tour for the second time! *Manodharma sangita* on the other hand, is full of surprises or novelties – more akin to an adventurer's travelogue.

Due to these features, listening to *kalpita sangita* has a neutral or soothing effect (depending on the notes and treatments) while *manodharma sangita*, due to its uncertainties can create interest and keep up the tension or nervousness that results in any such uncertain or adventurous situation. A word about exceptions: *kalpita sangita* when rendered in *tisra gati*, the speed of such rendition can produce the same effect as *manodharma sangita*. According to an ancient Indian text, Swara Sastra, the 72 Melakarta Ragas control the 72 important nerves in the body. According to Kollegal Subramaniam, a South Indian musician, if one sings with due devotion, adhering to the Raga Lakshana and Sruti Shuddham, the raga could affect the particular nerve in the body in a favourable manner. He points out that by singing the 72 Melakarta Ragas, stomach operation was avoided and ailment cured.

While the descending notes in a raga (avarohana) do create inward-orienting feelings, the ascending notes (arohana) represent an upward mobility. Thus music played for the soldiers or for the dancers have to be more lively and uplifting with

frequent use of arohana content. Similarly melancholic songs should go for 'depressing' avarohanas. Although it is not a rule, most of the Western tunes based on major keys play joyful notes, while those composed in minor keys tend to be melancholic.

Certain ragas do have a tendency to move the listeners, both emotionally and physically. An involuntary nod of the head, limbs or body could be manifest when lilting tunes are played. The real impact of sound is more evident when there is a metallic screech, which nails the nerves and makes the body undergo a sudden shiver!

Some Therapeutic Ragas

Some ragas like Darbari Kanhada, Kamaj and Pooriya are found to help in defusing mental tension, particularly in the case of hysterics. For those who suffer from hypertension, ragas such as Ahirbhairav, Pooriya and Todi are prescribed to control anger and bring down the violence within. Carnatic ragas like Punnagavarali, Sahana etc., do come in handy. For stomach-related disorders, there are ragas from the Hindustani school, Deepak for acidity, Gunkali and Jaunpuri for constipation and Malkauns (Hindol) for intestinal gas. For controlling high fevers such as malaria, ragas such as Malkauns (Hindol) and Marva are

considered useful. One can try Darbari Kanhada, Jayjaywanti or Sohini as a treatment for headache.

Conclusion

The growing literature indicates that ragas could be a safe alternative for many medical interventions.

Simple iterative musical rhythms with low pitched swaras, as in bhajans and kirtans could do wonders as a sedative, substituting powerful analgesics such as Valium, which show at times adverse side-effects. They are found to change the brain wave patterns from beta to alpha levels, thereby causing relaxation in the minds of the listeners, leading to favourable hormonal changes in the system.

It is necessary that a group of exponents in Indian ragas join experts in medicine to help evolving a system of raga therapy which could be profitably used in alleviation of the most common illness of the modern times: stress and stress-related disorders, being faced by the leaders, professionals and managers, which are being brought about by the ever-increasing man-machine interface, resulting in machine-prompted human behaviour. □

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THE TWAIN SHALL MEET (Contributed)

We revel in identifying diversity in unity and have created administrative, cultural, linguistic and social barriers in a heterogeneous Indian ethos. Seven centuries back, we had a unified system of music - which now stands bifurcated as two systems of classical music, the Hindustani and the Karnatic systems. Alien hegemony, culture and religion were being imposed and pressures of Islamic imposition were considerable. The precise cause for bifurcation of the unified system is yet unknown; it is surmised that the Northern group was not averse to absorption of alien values and that the Southern group was highly resistant to such absorption.

Swaras which are considered Komal in Karnataka Sangeeta are Tivra in Hindustani music and vice-versa. In Karnataka Sangeeta, rendition starts usually at the "Sama" laya-level, while renditions end on the Sama, in Hindustani music. Bhava and Sahitya are highly spiritualistic in Karnataka Sangeeta and finitely erotic in Hindustani music. The accent in Karnataka Sangeeta, delves on Sarvakaalika Ragas while the Ragas in Hindustani music are confined to water-tight Gayana-Kaala compartments. Manodharama is encouraged in Karnataka Sangeeta, while the Gharana dogmas dominate in Hindustani music. Shruti values are relatively flexible in Karnatic Music, while they are perfect in Hindustani music. Percussion-oriented "bols" are more beautiful in Hindustani music.

Pandit Bhatkande rejected the permutative Melakarta Scheme of Karnatic music and evolved the more aesthetic oriented Taat-system. The efficacy of the Taat-system is devalued by the number of exceptions permitted.

Each system has its virtues, absolute and derived and has, in comparative terms, drawbacks as well.

With diametrically opposite concepts in many spheres, is there any common plane of interaction? Or is it a case of "North is North and South is South and the twain shall never meet"? Is the division between the two musical systems absolutely water-tight, with no common link or legacy?

Raga Piloo, of folk origin is cognized, yet unimportant in the Karnatic system and has a finite status in the Hindustani system. In both systems, it is relatively subordinate to Raga Kaapi or Kaafi. Two pieces have survived in Raga Piloo, in Karnatic music. One is a delectable "Laali" by Purandaradasa and the second is the composition "Bhajare Yadunaatham". This legacy of Raga Piloo, has now become archival.

Karnataka Sangeeta had an indigenous Raga Kaapi, which has now become hybrid. Karnataka Kaapi has three versions nowadays. The version in Swati Tirunal's "Suma Saayaka" is too proximate to Karaharapriya, defacing individual identity. Venkatamakhin's version is virtually Raga Kaanada. The plausibly

ancient Karnataka Kaapi is best seen in Shyama Shastri's "Akhilandeshwari", with definite nuances of Raga Darbar. However, what is Raga Kaapi, nowadays, in Karnatic music? It is only Hindustani Kaapi. The effect of Hindustani Kaapi was so profound, that compositions, originally set to Raga Karnataka Kaapi came to be retuned. Tyagaraja's "Intha Sowkhyia" and "Meevalla Gunadosha" shifted to Hindustani Kaapi and "Nityaroopa" migrated to Raga Darbar. Note the reference in the Hindustani Lakshan-geet "Guni gavat Kaapi raag", to Karaharapriya Mela!

At this juncture, the points to be cognized are :-

- Notwithstanding theocratic and virulent musicological viewpoints, some concepts of Hindustani music did find place in Karnatic music.

- Pundarika Vitthala of Karnataka, who spent several years at Jamnagar with Raja Shatrashaalya "Chatarsaal", does not refer to Raga Kaapi in the Rasakowmudi. Raga Kaapi came into the Karnataka system only in the 17th - 18th century A. D. perhaps, at a post-Trinity juncture.

It is not to be construed that all absorption into Karnatic music was only two-three hundred years back. References can be found in the list of 22 Bhashanga-Ragas which came to be absorbed in Karnatic music. One such Raga mentioned is Hamvir-Kalyani, ascribed to the Rajasthani bard Hamveer-Rasso. Muttuswami Dikshitar has used the Raga-Mudra "Hamveer". Yet, we call it Hamir-Kalyani, with Islamic spice. The irony is that the Raga Hamvir-Kalyani of

Karnataka Sangeeta corresponds to Raga Kedar of Hindustani music. The name and structure are not synchronous with the Hindustani versions. A case of aberrated absorption.

There are identical Ragas in the two system, with different names. Take the case of Raga Karnataka Shuddha Saveri of Karnatic music. The Ragas Malahari, Kannada Bangala and Karnataka Shuddha Saveri are very close. Only Muttuswami Dikshitar has composed in all three Ragas. The emphasis in Raga Shuddha Saveri, is on the Rishabha swara. We find many musico-aesthetic similarities between Dikshitar's "Ekaamresha Naayike" and Pankaj Mallick's "Yeh kaun aaj aayaa saavere saavere". The counterpart of Raga Karnataka Shuddha Saveri, in the Hindustani system, is Raaga Gunkali. This is an example, perhaps, of insulated, yet identical creation.

Raga Lalita deserves a case-study. Raga Vasanta is totally Karnatic. Raga Lalita, close to Raga Vasanta, was introduced into Karnatic music. In such effort, the Pratimadhyama was removed and Raga Lalita came in as a Shuddha-Madhyama Raga. All members of the musical-trinity have composed in Raga Lalita, a point to be noted. Tyagarajaswami and Dikshitar have used Raga Goorjari, a similar example.

Like Karnataka Shuddha Saveri - Gunkali identity, we have the case of Karnataka Devagandhari and Raga Bhimpalas. Note, once again, that only Muttuswami Dikshitar has distinguished

amongst the Ragas Abheri, Karnataka Devagandhari and Kannada Gowla.

Raga Yaman came to India from Yemen. Sripada Raja stoutly opposed singing such "Turushka" (Turkish-Islamic) Ragas. He opposed the rendition of even Raga Kalyani. Can you imagine Karnatic music without Kalyani? The mistake committed nowadays by musicians is the superimposition of Yamuna-Kalyani on Yaman. Raga Yaman does not have the swara-passage "ma-ga-ma-ri-sa" with the Shuddha Madhyama only in "ma-ri-sa-ni-sa". Dikshitar has composed in Yaman. Tyagaraja, in Yamuna Kalyani. Many sing an amorphous version!

Muttuswami Dikshitar spent nine years in Varanasi, listening to Hindustani music. We can point out some instances, where one composition has traces of Hindustani pakkads/prayogas and some are pure Karnatic music:

Raga Lalita

Hiranmayeem Lakshmeem (Pure Karnatic)

Agasteeshwaram (Hindustani traces)

Raga Karnataka Devagandhari

Panchashat Peetha (Pure Karnatic)

Kaayaarohanesham (Traces)

Raga Hindola

Saraswati Vidhiyuvati (Pure Karnatic)

Neerajakshi (Traces)

Muttuswami Dikshitar adopted the Dhrupad-style in some compositions; very clearly a case of adoption like Marwa and Ramkali, with both Madhyamas – the Shuddha Madhyama dominating.

The most valuable import from Hindustani music, is the folk-melody, Raga Jhenjhuti, in which, we have compositions of Tyagaraja and Dikshitar.

Karnatic music has not been averse to accepting meritorious melodies from Hindustani music, despite a conservative outlook.

Reverse musical-osmosis is of very recent origin. Ragas Hamsadhwani and Abhogi went into Marathi Naatya-Sangeet before entering the Hindustani mainstream. Ragas Sindhu Bhairavi, Daakshinaatya Vasanta, Charukeshi and Keervani are some Karnatic Ragas which have found a niche in Hindustani music.

The acceptance of light classical pieces heralded the presence of Ragas like Ahir-Bhairav, Ragheshri, Bairaagi-Bhairav and Basant-Bahaar in Karnatic music.

Absorption is one-sided and has to be balanced. The linguistic barrier has to be transcended. Then, the Twain shall meet. □

INTERVIEW

MRIDANGA BHUSHANAM OF "KAALAPRAMAANAM"

"Will you come with me to Tanjavur? I'll teach you Mridangam," Not a mere offer was that - from a great Laya Titan to a tiny boy of eight whom he happened to listen to, accompanying a Kalakshepa maestro. The passion for talent search and magnanimity for moulding the same into artistes was very much reflected in that offer. The boy, T.K. Murthy who followed the titan Tanjavur Vaidyanatha Iyer never looked back. The journey he undertook that day in "Kaalapramaanam" continues to date and at 83, the short, dynamic Mridanga Chakravarthy stands tall churning the unfathomable ocean of Laya and carrying on the mission of his teaching his mentor left behind, besides performing and propagating the art of Mridangam



T.K. Murthy

The saga of octogenarian Sangita Kalanidhi T.K. Murthy, hailed as "Mridanga Bhushanam" and "Mridanga Chakravarthy" - whom the writer had the fortune of interviewing in December 2004, when he had come to Mumbai as part of the team to pay Sangeethanjali to the Paramacharya - is one that unfolds the enormous strides the art of Mridangam has made during the last seven and a half decades along his own professional progress

That the 'Murthy' is small but 'Keerthi' (fame) is great goes without saying. For here is an octogenarian who has cherished and flourished the art of percussion for over seven decades accompanying more about four generations of artistes. Himself a musician, he is a repository of musical information and an account of his experience with great musicians would be a worthy education to youngsters. He has always been an amiable percussionist enhancing the beauty of the concert. The totality of the concert was his prime focus and he used to be an inspiration, be it a stalwart or a fresher, to come out with his best. In his subtle melodic strides, the Sangathees hummed sweetly and the swaraprastharas drew lilting inspiration. His

value of silence revealed much in laya-spinning. But the towering Thani would bring out the genius in him - the power strokes with punch in Arudis, the soft embellishments and the 'Nadai-bheda' etc. A good object lesson to percussion aspirants.

During the vast span of performance; he has accompanied as mentioned earlier four generations of artistes right from Muthiah Bhagavathar, Neelakanta Bhagavathar, Ariyakudi and his contemporaries including GNB, Alathur Brothers, Semmangudi, the next generation of K. V. Narayanaswamy, Dr. Balamuralikrishna, then on to T. V. Shankaranarayanan and up to Sanjay Subramanian and artistes of his age. His accompaniment to O. S. Thyagarajan on the occasion of the Sangeethanjali was an experience to cherish. However his 'sojourn' with M. S. Subbulakshmi as her 'pucca' percussionist for thirty long years was 'greatly beneficial', he had confessed once.

It is needless to say that a veteran who has been in the performing forum is the recipient of a number of awards and honours. An Asthana Vidwan of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, he was conferred the "Mridanga Bhushanam" by none other than the Paramacharya himself along with the Prasadam of 'fruit-in-milk' which he values the most. A Doctorate Degree from University of Arizona, U.S.A., "Mridanga Chakravarthy", Sangeet Nataka Akademy Award and honours and titles from Chennai Music Sabhas - the list is endless. Suffice it to say, the Chakravarthy remains humble and supreme in his art of percussion / accompaniment.

Talking to him was scanning through history - nearly of a century! It veered round "Kaalapramaana" through the decades. T. K. Murthy straightaway started with what Kaalapramaanam is and delved into a comprehensive analysis, with deeper connotation.

Kaalapramaanam should be like heart-beat and the earth revolving in same move, pace - neither slow nor fast. A little discrepancy in this order would have devastating results.

Do you know, Tala too has Bhava like Swara and Sahitya? And that is inherent in Kaalapramaana. We can draw a wealth of ideas from the Vaggeyakaras

creations, that is, compositions. The pacing, the Kalai; why, the variety of Eduppus (take of points) itself opens up great lessons to the art of Mridangam play.

To get a perfect Kaalapramaanam in Mridangam, one should be an adept in playing for Bharata Natyam. The Melaprapti - the Mridanga Thani, the

Todayamangalam, Alarippu, Varnam, and Tillana etc. give one a good grip over the Tala and Kaalapramaanam. We all had been sent to play for Bharata Natyam to acquire a firm grip in this phase.

Does the practice continue today?

Times have changed. Where is the Gurukula? One has to go, get trained oneself. And today the 'Taththakkaaram' is accelerated; not so earlier.

We see in some of the concerts Mridangam accompanying Tanam in Sarvalaghu. Was there any such thing for Alapana?

Why not? There was Talam playing for Alapana just like Thavil accompaniment for Nagaswara Alapana. Similarly for Tanam too. The Bhava evoked on percussion was quite inspiring to the main artiste. But all that keeping time for Alapana was abandoned during Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar's time.

How was your Gurukula experience as you were inducted at a very young age, almost a child?

My Gurukula was a memorable experience. I was treated as a son, I remained a son throughout. It was an affectionate and disciplined home that taught us art and life. There was a 'Laya-perfect' in everything that was observed. My Guru's perception of gauging a student's talent and moulding him accordingly was unique. There were 50 to 60 students at a time in the Gurukula. Everybody was taught and fed with equal care and affection. And

everyday was a Samaaraadhana day at meals time!

Vaidyanatha Iyer's method of teaching was unique. He straightaway introduced us to playing for compositions. And there would be vocalists who would sing for our practice session. For instance, Tambuswamy (T.M. Thyagarajan's brother) and I would be paired and our practice session would last for a number of hours accompanying either T.M. Thyagarajan or Tanjavur Lakshminarayana Bhagavathar. Besides our Guru, Mridanga Vidwan Mahalingam Pillai too sometimes helped us on playing for compositions.

Another significant feature in our Gurukul was anytime when our Guru got inspiration, he would teach us rare combinations. Once he taught Palghat Mani Iyer and me at midnight how to weave easily Mohras in Misra Triputa Talam.

The maestro goes nostalgic demonstrating the same, a unique experience for the writer.

The large-heartedness of my Guru can't be expressed in words. An artiste has to have 'two Gurus', the one who trains you and the other 'experience'. And experience mostly gained by listening and playing for a variety of performances. My Guru used to encourage us to play for concerts, Kalakshepam etc.

As I had already had experience of listening to all percussionists and night-long Thavil play at Suchindram temple procession, thanks to my brother's disciplined upbringing, before entering the

Gurukula, I could easily step into the accompanist's role. Playing to Hariquesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar, Mazhavai Chidambara Bhagavathar and Tiger Varadachariar at the instance of my Guru gave me a good boost. And playing to Marathi Kathaakaars like Vishnu Pawa and Lattu Pawa helped me learn accompanying to Dhrupad, Abhang and Katka etc. Similarly, the Tala varieties which featured in Kalakshepam enriched my sense of laya intricacies. I had practiced playing for dance at Sangita Kalanidhi Ponniah Pillai's 'Silambakkoodam' and also played for dance recitals.

During my concert sojourn in Calcutta, I had an opportunity to learn the Tabla-technique from Amrit Hussain Khan.

We were taught at our Gurukula, Kanjira, Konnakol etc. We had different sessions where each one of us took turn in playing Mridangam, Kanjira, and Konnakol

Is Mridangam just an 'accompaniment' or can it be considered as an 'equal' in a concert-team? For there is a view prevalent among Mridangists that the word 'accompaniment' is a 'misnomer' and assigning Mridangam a third place in a concert, to so challenging a role that it plays, is unjustifiable. They contend that an Mridangist has a dual role, one supportive and the other soloist. Supportive to the concert artiste, be he a vocalist or instrumentalist in the various segments of compositions, Niraval and Swaraprastharas and be 'himself' in the

solo 'Thani'. To remain unobtrusive and yet not lose his identity is very challenging and requires a lot of listening to various styles, gaining experiences at a variety of concert forms such as regular concerts, Harikatha, Dance etc., assimilating them and striking balance between aesthetics and intellect. What is your view?

It is a "Pakka Vadyam" (accompaniment). That does not undermine its importance. An Mridangist's responsibility is to elevate the level and quality of a concert, enhancing the beauty and aesthetics of the compositions, the mode of rendering by supportive strokes with melodic and rhythmic nuances adding Bhava to the Laya. Even in the Thani, he can unravel the beauty and intricacies of the Tala but within the ambit of the composition or the Pallavi for which he plays. He should use his discretion to improvise proportionately. In fact, the totality of the concert should be his prime focus. "Paattukku Vaasippadhu" (playing for the composition) is an art by itself. A major time of training should be reserved for this. Similarly to play for Niraval and Swaraprastharas equally need special attention.

Unfortunately today Mridangam play is being given a solo treatment and 'Anusaranai' to compositions relegated. Youngsters should listen to all elders in their concert play and gain in practical knowledge.

Have you heard of 'double Mridangam'? My Guru introduced this, why even triple Mridangams for concerts. Yet

there was no din and noise. So subdued and synchronized the play used to be. I have played with my Guru and Tambuswamy and it was a great education and experience.

You have been focusing all through on "Kaalapramaanam". Could you now explain how they have been doing "Shatkala" etc?

Why, it is not only Shatkala, they play today in 18 Kaalams (tempi). It is all due to the

influence of Hindustani music. The Kaalams that are played are relative and not exact doubling or quadrupling as it should be in Carnatic Music. Do you now follow the magic?

(He concludes with a twinkle in his eye!)

Can't we contain the rage?

No. It'll end up in riots in rhythm. □

- Sulochana Rajendran

Form IV

(See Rule 8 of Press & Registration of Book Act)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Place of Publication | Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.), Plot No. 292, Comrade Harbanslal Marg, Mumbai - 400 022. |
| 2 | Periodicity of Publication | Quarterly |
| 3 | Printer's Name & Address | Sevak Press
B-1, Shalimar Indl. Est.,
Matunga Labour Camp, Matunga,
Mumbai - 400 019 |
| 4 | Publisher's Name
Nationality
Address | Shri S. Seshadri
Indian
Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.),
Mumbai - 400 022. |
| 5 | Editor's Name
Nationality
Address | Shri P. N. Krishnamoorthy
Indian
23, Saras Baug,
Sion-Trombay Road, Deonar,
Mumbai - 400 088 |
| 6 | Name and Address of Individuals who own the Newspaper and Partners or Share-holders holding more than one percent of the capital. | Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.), Plot No. 292, Comrade Harbanslal Marg, Mumbai - 400 022. |

I, S. Seshadri, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/- S. Seshadri
Signature of Publisher

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WHY THIS DELAY, OH LORD ?

Why this delay, my beloved Lord ?
Why make me wait so long ?
The Keeper of my heart, O God of Gods,
What did I do to You, what went wrong?

Were You so engaged with Your Consort,
So enthralled by Her song and dance;
Was that so exquisite a concert,
That you couldn't spare me a glance?

Was Mount Kailash so far removed,
Its peaks so high; the sound of running streams,
Its cadence so profound; it left you unmoved,
To the agony in my silent scream?!

Was it the comely Ganga, her flowing grace,
Her colossal life-force, her vigour, her verve;
Did her beauteous smile so hold Your gaze,
That, from Your purpose, made you swerve?

Or was it Cupid's clever arrow,
That enticed You towards an Apsara?
Pray, why do you cause me such sorrow,
Such misery and melancholy, O Shankara?

Humbly, I surrender my entire being at Your Feet,
I beseech You, let not any more time pass,
Grant me the nectar of Your Presence, so sweet,
Arrive swiftly, protect this lovelorn lass!

- Priya Viswanathan
Mumbai

POET'S NOTE :

This humble contribution of mine had been inspired by music itself. I was listening to Shri G. N. Balasubramaniam's soulful Ragam Thanam Pallavi rendition of 'Tamadam En Swami' (Thodi), when this idea suddenly came to me. Besides, a verse in the Saundarya Lahari describes Devi Parvati's anger and jealousy, when she spies Ganga in Lord Shiva's Jata - something that's commonly depicted through Abhinaya (expression) in dance. All these depict that the various Arts are inter-connected and to view Art in a holistic manner is the ideal approach.

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BOOK REVIEW

GREAT MASTERS OF CARNATIC MUSIC by Indira Menon; Published by: Indialog Publications; Pages: 307; Price: Rs. 295/-

Indira Menon is a Delhi University lecturer, who after her retirement has been totally involved in research on music. Conversant and fluent in a number of languages which has endowed her with a keen understanding of music, Indira Menon has the added advantage of being trained by the venerable Smt. Brinda.

The book under review is a critical study of the distinctive styles and musical attainments of Carnatic musicians who dominated during the period 1930-1965. Smt. Menon has restricted herself to fourteen great masters whom she had the privilege of listening to, since her childhood and whose music enthralled her completely.

The author has covered the leading lights of the era, the major events of the lives of the artists and the influences that shaped the career of each artist. One is impressed by the delectable anecdotes that are recounted. She has close interaction with the musicians, their families, disciples and friends.

Research scholars are presented on a platter a wonderful collection of articles by the musicians themselves where they reminisce on their masters and eminent artists and expound their thoughts on classical music. Rightly has the author

pleaded that we must hear the music of the masters again and again and realize the value of the great efforts they made to keep alive this ancient and respected art—Carnatic music.

I shall recount some of the significant anecdotes that this book is studded with.

Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, who introduced the *Kaccheri Paddhati* as we know it today, commanded universal respect. There is a story about a Chettiar who was a patron of the Sabhas, but had little knowledge of music. He used to attend the concerts and after some years, observed rather condescendingly to Ariyakudi, "You have improved over the years". To which Ariyakudi replied, "It is you who have improved."

When Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer was singing, a *rasika* expressed a doubt about his *Alapana* in *Durbar* and said there were shades of *Nayaki* (a closely allied raga) in it. The musician, noted for his ready wit, quipped, punning on the names of the ragas, "Have you heard of a *Durbar* without a *Nayaki*?"

The pathos-laden *Nagumomu* had Musiri Subramania Iyer at his best. Not all the twenty-one other recordings of that song could sound as moving. Two of these twenty-two versions are by M.S. Subbulakshmi. A little known fact

revealed by T.K. Govinda Rao is that Musiri was the first to sing and propagate the kritis of Swati Tirunal. He had drawn the attention of the public to them by participating in the Swati Tirunal Festival in 1943. The Swati Tirunal College of Music was started only the next year. Musiri's greatest achievement was to train M.S. Subbulakshmi. Musiri had played the role of Tukaram in the film of that name.

Of Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, Semmangudi had once declared, "Chembai's voice does not need a mike. It needed a silencer." Chembai gave his first and last performance at the Poozhikunnam Temple near Ottapalam. A snobbish gentleman was once travelling in a train with Chembai. Noticing that at every station crowds kept pouring into the compartment to greet Chembai with flowers and garlands, he concluded that he was some great musician. Unable to resist his curiosity he asked, "Are you Ariyakudi?" Chembai replied in the negative. "Are you Semmangudi?" Chembai replied, "Kudi illai Ayya. Verum Chembai." (That is No kudi. I am plain Chembai). This could also mean, "I do not drink. I am plain Chembai".

Semmangudi stories are legion. Kalki, his close friend, was critical of the musician's pronunciation. He wrote, 'Semmangudi pronounced "Siva Siva Enarada" as "Jiva Jiva Enarada". Semmangudi published "Swati Tirunal Kritimanimala with the text in Tamil, Malayalam and Sanskrit, "Bhavayami

Raghuramam" is a charming composition summarising Ramayana, of which only the first and last verses used to be sung. Semmangudi set the entire poem to a beautiful chain of ragas with exciting chittaswarams. It has been immortalised by M.S. Subbulakshmi. Semmangudi wrote an authoritative biography of Swati Tirunal.

M.S. Subbulakshmi was a towering musical personality and was divinely blessed with a golden voice. *Ragabhava*, *sahityabhava*, *sahitya suddham* and *sruti suddham* are the hallmarks of M.S. Bani. Sadasivam, who allowed M.S. to enter the celluloid world stopped her from acting after "Meera" which had led to a saintly aura enveloping M.S. in the public mind.

It is said of G.N. Balasubramaniam that he had to be booked a year in advance and even marriage dates were changed to suit his convenience. When GNB took the stage the air would crackle with excitement and if Palghat Mani Iyer were to accompany him, the audience could look forward to a spectacular display of fireworks, with stars and sprays in myriad colours shooting off into the sky in quick succession. During one of GNB's concerts, he noticed a girl suddenly rise and leave the hall and he started with the song, "*Nalla Sagunam Nokki Chelladi*" (choose an auspicious moment to leave). When someone asked Palghat Mani Iyer as to where one should sit at a GNB concert he replied, "You have to stand at the main entrance when he arrives, for it is not enough to hear him; it is important

to see this handsome man as he enters in all his majesty". GNB was a "Prince Charming"

When the senior musician Semmangudi asked Brinda to teach him the javali "*Smarasundara*", she said, "I shall teach it with the higher madhyama and if you are not prepared to sing it that way you'd better not learn it from me" Brinda was the first to use voice modulation, according to Ravikiran. She sang in her full-throated voice and never introduced the falsetto".

D.K. Pattammal was called "Paadu Pattammal" by Ariyakudi. This meant literally "Sing, Pattammal". But if pronounced wrongly 'Paadu Patta Ammal', it means "the Lady who struggled". In the popular mind the credit for being the first woman to sing Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi goes to Pattammal. She too sang for films and her 'Aduvome' sung to the accompaniment of a dance number by Baby Kamala contributed to the success of the film "Nam Iruvar"

Madura Mani Iyer had a highly personalized *Bani*, the like of which had never before been heard. His mellifluous voice earned him the name "Madhura Mani Iyer". He was great believer in the influences of planets on human affairs. At the commencement of a concert he would pay obeisance to the planet of that day by singing the appropriate Navagraha Krithi of Dikshitar. He avoided the song "*Nidicahala Sukhama*" (Tyagaraja's

celebrated krithi spurning wealth) and explained that Tyagaraja was a saint and could do without money. We cannot and, therefore, it would amount to hypocrisy to sing it and then pocket the fee. Among Mani Iyer's odd interests was studying the Bradshaw and there was nothing that he did not know about trains, their timings, etc

In fine, Indira Menon's book has splendid pace, sparkling anecdotes and scintillating analysis. It is warmly commended to all lovers of music, students and connoisseurs alike and scholars researching Carnatic music.

- P. P. Ramachandran

CARNATIC SUMMER by Sriram. V ;
Published by: East West Books (Madras)
Pvt Ltd; Pages: 311; Price: Rs. 295/-

Close on the heels of "Great Masters of Carnatic Music" by Indira Menon, I have with me another book of the same genre. It is again about Carnatic musicians. The author has impeccable credentials. Sriram is currently, Contributing Editor of *SRUTI*, the classical music journal. He is co-author of a Quiz book on Carnatic music and writes regularly on music in Indian Express and Madras Musings. Along with Sanjay Subrahmanyam he is running a website on music.

He has culled out twenty Carnatic musicians of the 20th century who were

top performers marking a high noon in this art form entitling the book to be appropriately christened "Carnatic Summer". The introduction is a consummate summary of the history of this art from Sarangadeva to Purandaradasa, Kshetragna, Venkatamakhin, the benign Tanjore kings, the reign of the Classical Trinity and the giants of twentieth century, some of whom we were lucky to hear.

We have a veritable galaxy including a dozen vocalists, four violinists, one Nagaswaram vidwan, one flautist and two percussionists. Their lives and lifestyles which had an impact on their art are succinctly covered. Since copious material is available on the major artists — like MS, Semmangudi, Chembai, etc I shall concentrate on those about whom not much is known or written. Rightly has the author written, "If Carnatic music is still heard all over the world and makes an emphatic and grand statement of survival each year during the annual December session in Chennai, it is because of these great men and women, powerful personalities who bore the art form aloft amidst crisis and threats".

I shall begin with a story on Madurai Mani Iyer. He had a house on Luz Church Road just behind a bus stop which was called "Mani Iyer Stop". During the time he resided there, the Paramacharya of Kanchi happened to pass that way with his entourage. He stopped outside Mani Iyer's house. The Paramacharya was well received and he asked for Mani Iyer and

was informed that he had not yet bathed that day and was hence indoors as regulations demanded that nobody could appear before the Seer before taking bath first. The Acharya called out Mani Iyer and blessed him saying that his music was his mode of worship and he need not worry about worldly rituals and observances. What great piety!

Papanasam Sivan treated D.K. Pattammal as his daughter and he suggested that she should sing the song '*Desa Seva Seyya Varir*'. The song was enormously popular with Pattammal's emotional rendering, Kalki's lyrics, and Papanasam Sivan's tune. In 1949, *Vazhkai* of AVM saw the debut of Vyjayanthimala plus Pattammal singing *Bharata Samudayam Vazhgave*. This rendition was accorded a national song status. Attending a Pattammal concert was akin to a slow boat ride, taking in the beauties of the roadside with the mind in a state of complete relaxation. Her music was deceptively simple and appealed directly to the heart.

Bade Ghulam Ali Khan visited Chennai in 1952 and took the city by storm. He developed great respect for M.L.Vasanthakumari whose performances he attended. Once on his way back to Bombay, the Khan discovering that MLV was also in the same train, moved over to her compartment and the two performed an impromptu *jugalbandi* to the delight of fellow passengers, taking turns in singing *svaras* between the tunnels in the Poona-Bombay ghat section!

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Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu was one of the greatest violinists of Carnatic music. He was extremely near-sighted almost to the point of blindness. Among many of his admirers were Sarojini Naidu, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, S. Radhakrishnan and Rabindranath Tagore. So impressed was Tagore that he sang Rabindra Sangeet to Dwaram's accompaniment.

Dwaram was the first violinist to be conferred Sangitha Kalanidhi in 1941. To relocate him from Andhra to Madras, a Sammana Mahotsav was arranged and a princely sum of Rs. 35,000 was collected. Dwaram accepted this award provided Rs.2,000 was given to his guru, Venkatakrishnayya and another Rs.2,000 to a violinist who had written damagingly about him in the 1920s but was now sick and requiring help. Compassion was his hallmark.

During the 1954 visit of Yehudi Menuhin to India, Dwaram attended his performance with Dr. P. V. Rajamannar. At the end of the programme Rajamannar took him backstage to introduce him to Menuhin. Dwaram wanted to touch Menuhin's instrument and possibly play on it as well. But the latter did not agree.

The upset Rajamannar arranged a concert of Dwaram's the very next day and invited Menuhin to attend the same. At the end of the performance Menuhin was so amazed at Dwaram's virtuosity that he walked up to him, took him by his hand and apologized for his brusqueness the previous day. The two spent the entire evening together and Dwaram was not

only allowed to touch Menuhin's violin but also play on it to his heart's content.

T. Chowdiah believed that the violin was of Indian origin and cited the unusual sculpture in Agastyeswara temple depicting a lady playing an instrument with a bow like the violin of today. Chowdiah abandoned the four stringed violin substituting it with one of seven strings and christened it *sapta tanthi*. On one memorable occasion, at the end of a spectacular performance by Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Chowdiah was so delighted that he hoisted the vocalist on his shoulders and danced a jig all around the concert hall.

The Chowdiah Memorial Hall in Bangalore is shaped in the form of a violin — a fitting tribute to one of the greatest violinists of India.

Another great violinist was Kumbhakonam Rajamanikkam Pillai. "*Mummanigalum Manikkamum*" was how the handbills would describe the concerts of GNB as vocalist, Rajamanikkam Pillai on the violin and Palghat Mani Iyer on the mridangam and Palani Subramania Pillai on the kanjira. The ruby in the above was the violinist. A very painstaking artist, it was a measure of his ambition to succeed, that Rajamanikkam ascended the platform on a day when his wife was in the throes of labour back home. At the end of the programme a visibly pleased Muthiah Bhagavathar presented Rajamanikkam with a set of violin strings along with customary gifts. Nestling among the

strings was a telegram which announced the birth of his child. In Tamizh, violin strings and telegrams are both referred to as *Thanthi*. This reflected Muthiah Bhagavathar's sense of humour and penchant for punning. Among Pillai's earliest students was the vocalist and film star M M Dandapani Desigar. Flute Mali had great affection for him and once Mali had come to perform but could not enter the hall due to milling crowds. Pillai gathered the 12-year old Mali, placed him on his shoulders and began striding towards the entrance. Using his enormous paunch as a rudder he shoved his way to the stage with admirable ease and deposited Mali on the stage. He was Mali's violinist that day.

T. N. Rajarathnam Pillai was a bohemian character who dominated the Carnatic music world for half a century. He was unique in his rendering of ragas on the nagaswaram and he was one of the unsurpassed geniuses of his time. A man who lived king-size, he also had five wives and drank himself to early death. He got rid of his tuft and adopted the modern hairstyle and refused to follow the accepted practice of nagaswaram vidwans performing bare-chested and came in silk kurtas and shawls.

When Semmangudi was asked to list the great geniuses of Carnatic music, he thought of three names—Flute Mali, T. N. Rajarathnam Pillai and Palghat Mani Iyer. Mali was a child prodigy. Mani Iyer's teaming with Mali was historic and the two

made great music for many years. The combination of the two geniuses and the music they produced together has been described as unparalleled, extra-ordinary and incredible. They were made for each other. Mali redesigned his flute, making its reed thicker and its bore smaller to produce a strong and rich tone. He used flutes with eight holes

Mali was greatly respected by the seniors of the music world. Chembai who was fond of him played the violin while Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer accompanied them on the mridangam at a Tyagaraja Vidwat Samajam performance. When during a performance at the R R Sabha, Mali was disturbed by T. L. Venkatarama Iyer and Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer chatting loudly in the front row, he publicly admonished them over the mike. And when they did not stop Mali ended his own performance by playing the *mangalam* at once! Mali was one of the victims of the 'bottle'

Palghat Mani Iyer was pure genius and he alone had the ability to weave a magic spell on his audience with his mridangam. Respect for him bordered on fear. Continuously researching on ways and means of improving the mridangam, he perfected the instrument as we know it today. The long list of artists he accompanied includes every name worth its salt. He formed close relationship with GNB and Alathur Subbier. In 1966, the Madras Music Academy honoured him with the Sangitha Kalanidhi, departing from

the tradition for the first time honouring a mridangist. Mani Iyer's last words were that he had to leave for a concert of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar with Dakshinamurthy Pillai accompanying him on the kanjira. Could be a concert for the Gods in their Heavens!

An added feature is a comprehensive glossary noted for brevity and clarity

The volume under review is indeed a goldmine, rich in anecdotes and presenting in one volume the growth of Carnatic music and capturing heights of glory with artists of a rare calibre and stature. All students and lovers of Carnatic music will profit greatly by carefully reading this valuable book.

- P. P. Ramachandran

WHAT IS MUSIC ? by T. V. Sairam;
Published by: Nada Center for Music
Therapy, Plot No. 11/25, Jothi Ramalingam
Street, Madipakkam, Chennai - 600 091,
India; Price: Not Mentioned

This book attempts to create an awareness in the minds of the readers on the hitherto neglected aspects of music as a complementary medicine.

Apart from discussing in depth the salient features of music such as its 'building blocks like pitch, note, rhythm,

melody etc., the various psychological, emotional, philosophical and scientific realms concerning music are also dealt with in this slim, but beautiful volume.

A new insight on the need for combining traditional practices with the modern therapeutic understanding makes this book outstanding and unique among all the recent publications made on the subject, in recent years. Complex subjects such as Nada Yoga and Neuro-musicology have also been covered and explained for the lay readers.

According to Sairam, there is a certain fluidity about music which melts away the stubbornness and rigidity underlying not only our physical constitution – but also the mental make-up. Further, the musical process when synchronized with mental process promises an elevated state of consciousness, referred to in modern neurology by the term 'brain wave patterns' of theta or alpha characteristics. It is this elevated state that promises a state of harmony and inner bliss, in the conflicting situations we come across in the present-day world.

Sairam also emphasizes the need for including the musical diet in our every day living for a healthy and positive attitude towards existence. Also presented is a useful bibliography of the terms associated with Music.

- Niloufer

A TRIBUTE

PANCHAPAKESHA IYER : AN ENDEARING TEACHER AND ERUDITE SCHOLAR

The passing away of Sangeetha Vidwan Shri A. S. Panchapakesha Iyer at the ripe old age of 90 at Mumbai on March 24, 2006 was indeed another terrible blow and irreparable loss to the Carnatic music world.

A Vidwan who had dedicated his entire life to the cause of Carnatic Music, he was a Vidwan in the true sense of the term, although his remarkable contribution to the art has not been duly recognized as it should have been.

Mention must be made though of the conferment of the title "*Sangeetha Seva Nirata*" by Sri Thiagaraja Sangeetha Vidwath Samaj, Chennai recognizing Shri Iyer's yeoman service and contribution to Carnatic Music as a musician and musicologist on 20th July 1996. "*Sangeetha Choodamani*" and "*Nadakannal*" are some of the other titles bestowed on him.

A Vidwan of outstanding merit, he established himself as a meritorious performer, and also as a guru revered by his host of disciples.

Younger brother of the celebrated *Sangeetha Kalanidhi*, Alathur Srinivasa Iyer, Shri Panchapakesha Iyer was born to Dwivedi Shri Sankara Srouthigal and Smt. Lakshmi Ammal as their fifth son amongst ten co-borns. He learnt music from his brother Srinivasa Iyer initially

and later under Mayavaram Rajam Iyer. Music was in his blood and the knowledge he acquired due to *Kelvi Gnanam*, enabled him to learn the intricacies of music. He managed to grasp and learn many krithis very quickly and thus mastered the art to the satisfaction of his gurus, and started giving performances. Though he formally started learning music only from the age of 18, he gave his first concert at the age of 20 at Trichy in a marriage function.

His love for becoming a pedagogue led him to join Kalakshetra where he served for four years, during which period he along with the famous composer Papanasam Sivan provided vocal support for the dance performances of the celebrated dancer Rukmini Arundale.

In 1942, he was chosen as Principal of R. R. Sabha, Chennai and served for over three decades. In 1974, Shri Iyer joined Bharatiya Music College, Mumbai on their request, as Principal, and played a vital role in the cultural side of Mumbai with his experience and talent. Later on returning back to Chennai after a long stint as Principal in Mumbai, he served as Principal, now of Sivan Arts Academy.

The greatest service of Shri Panchapakesha Iyer to Carnatic Music is the publication of his numerous books. These publications along with his theory

of music "Karnataka Sangeetha Sastram" have been of immense value to Vidwans, learners and aficionados of Carnatic Music. These are his gifts to be treasured.

Today all over the sphere wherever Carnatic Music is taught and practiced, the students follow Shri Iyer's books. For any beginner, his "Ganamrutha Bodhini" is a well known text book. While serving as Principal, he felt the need and urge for writing a book for the sake of his students. He was thus the first person to publish notations for beginner's lessons in Carnatic Music from Sarali Varisai to Geetam and Varnams. He undertook this project as he felt this would give students more time for practical singing sessions. His books, the first which was published way back in 1953, are invaluable to students because of their simplicity, clarity of notation and easy to follow approach, enabling the student to learn with no difficulty.

These books are available in many languages. Shri Iyer learnt Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam with the help of "learn in 30 days books" for the sole purpose of bringing out his books in these languages and brought out most of his books in his own handwriting. There are not many mistakes, as he had laboriously and patiently done the work all by himself. He has authored about forty books in five languages including English.

The order of the varnams and keerthanas are set according to the difficulty level, the easy ones first and the more complicated ones follow. These books are thus Shri Iyer's invaluable

contribution to Carnatic Music and are perfect guides to performing musicians too, who refer his books for correct notations.

Following are some of the books brought out by Shri Iyer — "Ganamrutha Bodhini, Ganamrutha Varnamalika, Ganamrutha Keerthanamalika, Ganamrutha Kriti Sagaram, Pancharatna Ganamrutham, Navagraha Ganamrutham, Sree Purandara Ganamrutham, Guruguha Ganamrutham, Patnam Subramanya Keerthanaigal, Shree Kamalamba Navavarnam" etc.

A modest, soft-spoken, unassuming and helpful natured person, he was a gentleman to the core who brought dignity to South Indian Music and culture. Shri Iyer spent most of his time reading, notating, collecting material on music and teaching students. A model teacher, he never liked to be disturbed for any reason in the midst of his class. Such was his love and passion for music. He patiently taught his students till they got the nuances right and made sure they understood it correctly.

In the evening of his life, Shri Iyer along with a few like-minded well-wishers founded the "Sangeetha Vidwan Shri A. S. Panchapakesha Iyer Trust" which was instituted in 1996 with the sole endeavour to promote, encourage upcoming Vidwans and preserve the great tradition of Carnatic Music.

With the passing away of the doyen, the Carnatic Music world is definitely poorer today. When will one see the likes of Guru Panchapakesha Iyer again? □

REPORT

"NATIONAL ARTIST" NOW RECEIVES THE PRESTIGIOUS "NATIONAL EMINENCE AWARD"

The **3rd Jayendra Saraswati National Eminence Award** was conferred on *Sangita Kalanidhi* Shri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, one of the renowned musicians of Andhra Pradesh at the Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Auditorium on 19th Feb 2006. His Holiness Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal blessed the doyen artist and presented him the award, which carries a cash prize of Rs.1 lakh, a silver lamp, a citation and other

mementoes. Shri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy was also honoured by the Kanchi Mutt with the title '**Sangeeta Sagara**'. Earlier in 1991, he was appointed the *Asthana Vidwan* of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam.

After the award ceremony, Shri Nedunuri gave a scintillating concert. He was accompanied by Shri R. Madhavan on the violin, Shri K. V. Prasad on the mridangam and Shri T. V. Vasan on the ghatam. His Holiness himself a



Shri Nedunuri receiving the silver lamp from the Kanchi Acharya

connoisseur, with his deep knowledge of music, was seen enjoying and appreciating Shri Nedunuri's music and left only at the fag end of the concert.

Born on October 10, 1927 to Shri Ramamurthy Panthulu and Smt. Vijayalakshmi at Kothapalli in the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, fondly and popularly referred to as just Nedunuri in the music circles, received his early training in music from Shri Badam Appa Rao and Shri Kalluri Venugopala Rao. He later joined the Maharaja's Music College in Vizianagaram, where Shri Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu, the famed violin wizard was the Principal. In 1949, he came under the influence of the great master Dr. Sripada Pinakapani and was under his tutelage.

Shri Nedunuri has served as the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Chairman of the Board of Studies in Music

in Sri Venkateswara and Nagarjuna Universities. Under the auspices of the "Nadhasudha Tarangini" promoted by him, three volumes of *Annamayya Padasaurabham* consisting of 108 compositions of Annamacharya were released. In recognition of his efforts in popularizing Annamayya's compositions he was appointed *Asthana Vidwan* of the Tirupati Tirumala Devasthanam.

A traditionalist to the core, Nedunuri who has formed a unique style of his own, has won several awards and accolades during his long musical career that spans over 65 years. He has been recently awarded the 'National Artist' title by the All India Radio. He has been honoured with the *Sangeet Natak Akademi* award, the *Sangeeta Choodamani* title, to name a few. He has performed in all major events and festivals at all the leading Sabhas, both in India and abroad, spreading and propagating Carnatic Music far and wide. □

REPORT

INAUGURATION OF RENOVATED BHARATIYA COMPLEX

On Monday, the 27th February, 2006 the Bharatiya Music and Arts Society of Mumbai (which is presently under merger with Mumbai's Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha) celebrated the opening of the new refurbished building (a three story edifice which will house the music school and the *Bharata Ratna* Dr. M. S. Subbulakshmi Auditorium). The building houses an air-conditioned multipurpose hall on the ground floor which will be ideal for bhaitak style Sangeeth mehfils, music exhibitions, fine arts competitions, small gatherings,

conferences etc.. The basement and the first level will house the Sri Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeetha Vidyalaya which will result from the merger of the two presently existing schools, now being run under the aegis of the Sri Shanmukhananda Sabha and the Bharatiya Music and Arts Society respectively. The first level also houses a permanent exhibition on 'MS AMMA'. The second level of the building houses 'The *Bharat Ratna* Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi Auditorium' named after the legendary late Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi.



Sri Andavan Swamigal giving the Anugraha Bhashanam

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Prof. T.N. Krishnan
fully engrossed in his music

green rooms and adequate stage lighting, the auditorium is expected to become a favourite venue for lovers of Fine Arts in Mumbai. The auditorium is ideal for classical music concerts, dance recitals, dramas, seminars, promotional meetings, prayer meetings, orchestras etc.,

The inauguration of the Hall was a colourful function. It was graced by the presence of Srimad Andavan Swamigal. In his Anugraha Bhashanam, he revealed his musical prowess by singing in a powerful voice and by referring to matters musical in an authoritative manner. He also paid graceful tributes to the Late Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi.

Another feature of the occasion was the speeches made by personalities such as Kalki Rajendran, K.S. Mahadevan and Smt. Gowri Ramanarayan, who were close to Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi. Prof. T. N. Krishnan, the eminent violinist also spoke on the occasion. Shri. V. Shankar, President of the Sri Shanmukhananda Sabha recalled with great affection memories of Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi. He made a touching reference to the occasion when Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi met his daughter and knowing that her name was Akhilandeshwari burst into a song, the famous Muthuswamy Dikshitar Kriti 'Akhilandeshwari' in Dwijavanti. The other speakers also referred to the wonderful personal and musical qualities of Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi.

The function ended with a Violin recital by T. N. Krishnan.

- P. N. Krishnamoorthy

The music school with a present combined strength of about 600 students, will continue to offer a seven year course in Carnatic and Hindustani music and Bharatanatyam. It will also continue a two year Diploma Course in Carnatic music which is recognized by the University of Mumbai. Plans are afoot to offer Diploma courses in fields other than Carnatic Vocal such as instrumental Carnatic music as well as Vocal and instrumental courses in Hindustani music. Degree courses in various fields of music are also being planned.

'The Bharat Ratna Dr. M. S. Subbulakshmi Auditorium' is fully air-conditioned with a seating capacity of about 350. Excellent acoustics is ensured through a modern sound system. With two



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